

THE GUILD OF ST. BARNABAS

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ST. BARNABAS, A SON OF CONSOLATION

WHENEVER we catch a glimpse of this bright and God-like apostle, with his grave and commanding appearance, so that the men of Lystra called him Jupiter, we see him free and impulsive to a fault, hastening to sell all that he has, always generous in his actions and thoughts about other people. He would not give up John, whose surname was Mark, even when St. Paul wished it. He was sure there was some good in the young man, even though he had thrown up his work at a critical time. Years afterwards we find St. Paul warmly commanding St. Mark in his letter to the Colossians, and yet later we hear him asking for Mark to be brought unto him, "for he is profitable to me for the ministry." (2 Tim., iv., 11.)

So also when St. Paul, in the early days of his conversion, was in trouble and under suspicion, when this great and useful instrument for God was in danger of being chilled, St. Barnabas takes him and brings him to the Apostles St. Peter and St. James. It is St. Barnabas who explains exactly what had happened and dispels with his bright sunlight all unmanly suspicions.

We want the spirit of St. Barnabas, with his kind, gentle, strong touch, to rescue for Christ souls, among some of whom you may even find the making of a saint and the stuff which may become an apostle. There are souls for whom Christ died who are chilled, repressed, and driven back on evil because Christians are afraid of them and point at the past and question if the repentance is sincere. But Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. Who knows how many St. Pauls and St. Marks are being lost now for want of a St. Barnabas?

Here comes some man, some woman, to the hospital with a wistful look in the eyes as much as to say: "Can you help me? Do you know how I have prayed and struggled against this desperate sin which has brought me low and for which people despise and loathe me? Do you know? Do you care? Or are you just another nurse like the rest, doing what you are paid for, and not a minister of God?"

Has Christ given him up? Perhaps this accident or disease, which is the result of his own folly, is his crucifixion, and this poor soul may yet enter Paradise if only he can catch a glimpse of the Lord and Saviour to whom your sympathy has pointed him.

"See," our dear teacher used to say to us, "there is hardly a roadside pool which has not as much landscape in it as above it. It is not the brown, muddy, dull thing we suppose it to be. It has a heart like ourselves, and in the bottom of that there are the boughs of the tall trees, and the blades of the shaking grass and all manner of colors of variable, pleasant light and of the sky. Nay, even that ugly gutter which stagnates in the heart of the city is not altogether base.

Down in that, if you will look deep enough, you may see the dark, serious blue of the far-off sky, the passing of pure clouds, and at night the unspeakable glory of the stars, to see which meant for Dante the first joy on escaping hell. It is at your own will that you see in that despised stream the refuse of the city streets or the image of the sky, and the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

St. Barnabas had his full share of disappointment and loss.

Those who follow Christ expect that many things in life are, like frost and snow, enemies to the flowers but friendly to the root. In our own lives a little more of one thing or a little less of another—less nervousness, less disappointment, a fuller share of an immediate success, a fuller share of earthly loves—would perhaps have made us happier for the time and more apparently valuable people—would have given us a bloom and charm of life which we have missed.

The flowers might have been fairer, but how would it have been with the root, that germ of time, imperishable life? How would it have been if we had not had a restraining, disenchanting discipline?

St. Barnabas knew that it is hard for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God. That saying does not apply to money only, but to all that in which the natural heart delights. These things absorb, fascinate, and deaden spiritual discernment, therefore our Lord especially calls to the broken in heart—may I not also say the broken in life—"Come unto me." There is something which He must shatter and break in pieces before the fair structure in renewal of His likeness can arise. Therefore we must rejoice—a solemn joy, but a true one—in affliction, in disappointments, in all that perhaps one would fain have otherwise, if only so we may have a part in the high calling of Jesus Christ and be in our measure and degree sons and daughters of consolation.

ORANGE, N. J.—We are still going the round of the neighboring churches, and find that this method has greatly widened the interest in the guild meetings, which have all been largely attended. On the last Thursday in March we attended St. Paul's Church, Prospect Street, East Orange, and were most pleasantly entertained at this, our first visit. On April 30 we journeyed over in stages to St. Andrew's, East Orange, which is somewhat off the beaten track and less easy of access. This had no effect on the attendance, which was very gratifying. In the absence of the chaplain the Rev. Charles Pardee conducted the service and admitted one active member, a nurse from Montclair, Miss M. Forbes. A short business meeting followed. The subject of the annual reception was brought forward, as it is desired to extend an invitation to our chaplain general, who will be with the general secretary at the time of the annual meeting, when we hope to have the privilege of holding the reception in his honor at the house of our former secretary, Miss M. Pierson. The young ladies of the church later entertained us informally and served the most dainty and delicious refreshments. The fresh-air work is once more under active consideration, and in a few days the location will be decided, whether we shall try mountain air or again resume our search for a cottage by the seashore. It is our earnest desire to do that which will most greatly benefit the sick mothers and children. We regret to learn that Miss Mary Hunt is still in a very unsatisfactory state of health. Assiduous nursing for the full term allotted to the nurse's life has left its usual consequence. We trust that complete rest will restore her strength and energy.

ONE sometimes hears the reproach cast on trained nurses that they work for money, and for money alone. It hardly seems possible that this can be true, for, in spite of its drawbacks and disillusionment, there is something in nursing which draws out that spirit of love and maternal instinct without which any woman is a monster.

Many people say of private nurses: "I was repelled by Miss So-and-So's manner when she first came to me, but I found her very kind and gentle when I was ill."

A professional manner gets to be a sort of second skin; it is a nurse's armor, like the conventional politeness of the society woman, which is the mask she presents to all, and it is only when this is dropped that the personality shines forth.

Nurses often pine for a change, and many have given up what seems more lucrative work for charity or missionary nursing. A woman can then feel that she is doing something for humanity and something to spread the blessings of the gospel and of civilization.

To those who feel a vocation for mission work and are free to respond to the call many places are open. The fields are indeed white for the harvest, and we know that the reapers are blest indeed.

There have come to our ears recently demands from two such places, one in the foreign and one in the domestic field. Those of you who read the *Spirit of Missions* may have seen in the May number an article on a church work being done in Southern Florida, at Orlando. Not to repeat the interesting facts relating thereto, we may briefly say that this work is one which is doing much for the people of that region, both white and colored. The hospital has many needs to extend its work, and word has lately come that one thing that is greatly needed is skilled nursing. It is not at present possible to train the women of the section sufficiently to take more than a partial responsibility; the nurse in charge needs help very much. This is surely the place for a nurse with the missionary spirit, and such an one would be able to do much good work. The call is at our very doors, not to bring the good news to the heathen, but to the neglected and waiting Christian, and to starve in a land of plenty has always been counted a pathetic thing.

Again in China, that most interesting of all the countries of the older civilization, there is, in Wuchang, the Elizabeth Bunn Memorial Hospital for Women and Children, which was in charge of a medical missionary who went to Shanghai when the troubles broke out in 1900. This is a work of the most interesting and inspiring description and is one where a woman of good nursing ability would find a most interesting field. Life in China has always proved attractive to Europeans, even aside from any desire to devote oneself to one's kind and sex.

Any inquiries about either of these places and the sort of work needed, etc., should be addressed to the Church Missions House, New York, and we hope they may appeal to some among us.

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